

Message Text

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO RICHARD R. BAXTER HARVARD UNIV. CAMBRIDGE

MASSACHUSETTS 02138

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS:

SUBJECT:

PER YOUR TELEPHONE CONVERSATION WITH ASSISTANT SECRETARY ROGERS, THE FOLLOWING IS THE TEXT OF GOVERNOR REAGAN'S REMARKS ON PANAMA FROM HIS RECENT NATIONAL TELEVISION SPEECH. QUOTE. AS I TALK TO YOU TONIGHT, NEGOTIATIONS WITH ANOTHER DICTATOR GO FORWARD. NEGOTIATIONS AIMED AT GIVING UP OUR OWNERSHIP OF THE PANAMA CANAL ZONE. APPARENTLY, EVERYONE KNOWS ABOUT THIS EXCEPT THE RIGHTFUL OWNERS OF THE CANAL ZONE--YOU, THE PEOPLE OF THE UNITED STATES.

GENERAL OMAR TORRIJOS, THE DICTATOR OF PANAMA, SEIZED POWER EIGHT YEARS AGO BY OUSTING THE DULY ELECTED GOVERNMENT. THERE HAVE BEEN NO ELECTIONS SINCE. NO CIVIL LIBERTIES. THE PRESS IS CENSORED. TORRIJOS IS A FRIEND AND ALLY OF CASTRO AND, LIKE HIM, IS PRO-COMMUNIST. HE THREATENS SABOTAGE AND GUERRILLA ATTACKS ON OUR INSTALLATIONS IF WE DON'T YIELD TO HIS DEMANDS. HIS FOREIGN MINISTER OPENLY CLAIMS THAT WE HAVE ALREADY AGREED IN PRINCIPLE TO GIVING UP THE CANAL ZONE.

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THE CANAL ZONE IS NOT A COLONIAL POSSESSION. IT IS NOT A

LONG-TERM LEASE. IT IS SOVEREIGN U.S. TERRITORY EVERY BIT
THE SAME AS ALASKA AND ALL THE STATES THAT WERE CARVED FROM
THE LOUISIANA PURCHASE. WE SHOULD END THOSE NEGOTIATIONS
AND TELL THE GENERAL: WE BOUGHT IT, WE PAID FOR IT, WE
BUILT IT AND WE INTEND TO KEEP IT. END QUOTE. KISSINGER

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